

(b) Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme, the guidelines stipulate that funds provided for civil works must not exceed 33% of the entire project cost of a district and based on the infrastructure requirement of a district include *inter alia* a room for every teacher or for every grade/class, whichever is lower, at primary and upper primary, with the provision that there would be two classrooms with verandah to every primary school with at least two teachers and a room for head-master in a upper primary school/section; drinking water supply and toilet facilities in every school and one teacher for every 40 children in primary and upper primary schools.

(c) and (d) Progress in closing infrastructure gaps are tracked through the annual data provided through the District Information System for Education (DISE) every year on elementary education.

Literacy of Muslims

†1205. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the literacy rate of Muslims in the country is very low;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to achieve the national average rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) According to 2001 Census, the literacy rate of Muslims was 59.13% against the national average of 64.84%. The male and female literacy rate of Muslims was 67.56% and 50.09% as compared to the national average of 75.26% and 53.67% respectively.

(c) The national Literacy Mission (NLM) aims to impart functional literacy to the non-literates in 15-35 age-groups. The goal of the NLM is to attain a sustainable threshold level of 75% by 2007. Though no specific programme is being implemented for Muslims, the focus of all the programmes of NLM is on disadvantage sections of the society including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Women, Minorities, etc. 150 districts of the country, which have the lowest literacy rates have been identified for launching Special Literacy Drive. Most of the States, which have literacy rate of Muslims below the national average, have been covered under various

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

literacy programmes. In addition, financial assistance is provided to States for modernization of Madrasas and Makhtabs to ensure students of these institutions to acquire education comparable to national educational system.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas

†1206. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that with regard to the approval of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas such development blocks which are educationally backward are being left only on this ground that there is less gender gap;

(b) whether attention is not being paid to this fact that educational level of girls is lower in that development blocks; and

(c) the reasons for not including such blocks which are educationally lower completely?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALIASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (c) The criterion for identification of Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) for the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) scheme, is blocks where the female rural literacy is below the national average and the gender gap in literacy is above the national average. The rationale is to prioritize blocks where gender discrimination is more.

New courses in Banaras Hindu University

1207. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Banaras Hindu University has sent a proposal to Government with regard to its future expansion and introduction of new courses;

(b) whether it is a fact that this expansion will benefit around four States in the vicinity;

(c) if so, what is the proposal and how much amount has been requested by the university; and

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